



August 2, 2021

Dear Parents of 3s, 4s, and 5s,

It is with great enthusiasm that we welcome our 3-year-old, 4-year-old, and 5-year-old Kindergarten children back to in-person Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in our Good Shepherd atrium (Level I) on Sunday mornings. Catechesis is our primary faith formation offering for children at IPC. Our first day of catechesis will be on **Sunday, August 15th**, during the regular Sunday school hour from 9:50-10:50 am. The Good Shepherd atrium is located on the first floor of the Children's Ministries Education Hall in room 109. It will be your child's Sunday school classroom during this school year 2021-22.

**What is Catechesis?** We recognize that many of you may be new to catechesis since we were unable to gather in-person this past school year. Catechesis is an approach to religious formation that uses Montessori principles of a prepared environment and a child-focused experience to share scripture and our faith practices. A special room, called an atrium, is created for the children to do this religious work. The atrium has low shelves, soft lighting and neutral colors to create a calm, welcoming atmosphere. Children take their shoes off just inside the door. They learn to calm their bodies and minds, enabling them to listen to God and focus on this religious work. The atrium contains beautiful, hand-made lessons to help stimulate interest and the child's natural sense of wonder as they learn about God's great love for us. They learn how we practice our faith throughout the liturgical calendar with prayer, scripture, and song, and contemplate, "Who is God?" and "How much does He love us?" In addition to a short group time, the children will work one-on-one with trained teachers, called catechists, listening to scripture and thinking about how we worship God. In a few months, we will be sending a special invitation to parents to come experience the atrium with your child as an atrium helper. We look forward to having you learn more about catechesis and be an active participant in your child's faith formation!

**What does my child do during the 11:00 am worship service?** We encourage parents to pick their child up at 10:50 am from the atrium and attend worship service as a family. Attending worship helps children make real life connections to ideas we've discussed during atrium, such as the church's liturgical seasons, communion, and baptism. We invite you to pick-up a children's worship bag located outside the sanctuary doors that contains activities to further engage them in worship. During the 2nd hymn, children can follow the acolyte down the center aisle and out to the parlor where they will be escorted to Worship Care on the ground floor (G08). Your child is also welcome to stay in the worship service with you if you so choose. If you would prefer to have your child go directly from atrium to Worship Care, we are happy to bring all the children remaining in the atrium at 11 am down to Worship Care. Children in Worship Care can be picked up in G08 following the worship service. We are so looking forward to seeing everyone and welcoming them back to the Good Shepherd atrium (Level 1) and Worship Care starting on August 15! In the meantime, if you have any questions about Catechesis or Worship Care, please feel free to contact me.

Kay Roller, Director of Children's Faith Formation

[kroller@ipc-usa.org](mailto:kroller@ipc-usa.org) | 205.447.5168 (c)